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Volume Five - Number Four

Montana State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee

MONTANA SOICC

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MONTANA SOICC NEWSLETTER

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A Hamburger Economy?

Does the continuing decline of manufacturing and agriculture and the rise of services mean the American economy is becoming nothing more than a lightweight purveyor of fast food hamburgers? "The Economist" doesn't think so...

"The rising share of services in the jobs of advanced countries provides one of the most durable of today's phobias: a feeling that when peoples' incomes are not based on the making of things, they become phoney and flimsy. A service-dominated economy is certainly a more elaborate confection than the manufacturing economy of the past century, or the farming economy of the century before that. But fear of phoneyness is the wrong fear. Something that is the inevitable result of wealth cannot be dismissed as a mirage. The right fear is that...people may not be provided with the skills needed to cope with it.

"Farms that employed 65% of America's workers in 1850 use 3% today... Like that change, today's shift into services industries is being driven by forces that will appear irresistible with hindsight. About half of all services in a modern industrial economy are sold to people not directly, but in the form of goods that have embodied them. As industry and its products become more complicated, more and more added-value is created within manufacturing companies by service workers. One company reckons that only one-fifth of its workforce physically makes things. The rest is involved in thinking and problem-solving. They talk cheerfully of a time when their manufacturing costs will be effectively zero.

"The modern service job is as exportable and open to foreign rivalry as the works on this page. It is as vulnerable to technology as skilled ex-typesetters. It is cerebral and demanding. The revolution that has followed the industrial revolution is not a service revolution, but a cerebral one in which value is added not by skilled hands, but by skilled minds."

Changes to a service oriented economy in America is not such a negative move after all. But the service sector of the U.S. economy may face intensifying foreign competition, according to a study by a management-consulting firm. Service industries already experiencing foreign competition include banking, engineering, software development, retailing, insurance, advertising, and information systems, says Carl Sloane, president of Temple, Barke & Sloane, Inc., of Lexington, Massachusetts.

As foreign companies become more familiar with the U.S. market, they may become increasingly capable of challenging U.S. services, says Sloane. Modern telecommunications have made it much easier to deliver some services from abroad. Telecommunications are also opening up opportunities for American service providers to sell abroad.

SOURCE: The Economist, August 22, 1987; HSOICC Newsletter; THE FUTURIST, September-October 1987

Work Force Reshaped

High technology is having a great impact on every aspect of the labor market. Most new jobs will not be in the high technology field, however, and the newly created occupations will not require a substantial increase in job skills. That is because high technology is based on a reduction in the skilled labor force, providing higher productivity and greater efficiency at a lower cost.

Major technological changes are occurring primarily in three fields:

Telecommunications - In this rapidly changing field, many technological innovations are being developed: data networks, satellite and digitally encoded telephone and telecopy devices and systems, optical fibers and cables, electronic mail and shopping devices, and electronic funds transfer systems.

As business and industry adopt these technologies, only a few new occupations are expected to emerge (e.g., laser technicians), although no current occupations are expected to vanish from the telecommunications industry. However, changes are taking place in the job skills needed. Computerization of most manufacturing and installation jobs tends to lower mechanical skills required, while demand for computer programming skills is expected to increase.

Computer Applications - Technological advancement in the microcomputer industry has a large impact on all fields of technological innovation. New uses of computer technologies such as optical scanners, electrostatic printers, and laser-imaged discs have revolutionized the areas of data processing, information storage and retrieval, and word processing.

Computer applications have become vital for efficiency, productivity, and access in many industries (e.g., banks, insurance firms, automobile manufacturers, health care institutions, and libraries). As a result of these technological changes, many occupations are becoming more important (e.g., word processing specialist, computer programmer, and analyst). These computer-related occupations have replaced or reduced labor demand for office workers. However, new jobs are expected to emerge in information-processing occupations.

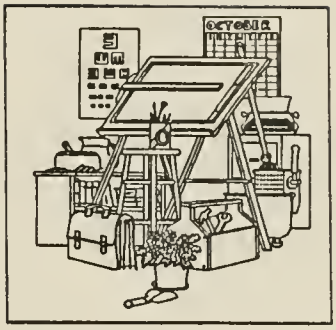
Advanced Manufacturing Technology - Today's advanced manufacturing technologies make use of sophisticated design, fabrication, assembly, finishing, and quality control equipment using microprocessor-driven control systems, lasers, programmable computerized robots, optical scanners, and an enormous array of new materials and processes.

These technologies are designed and adopted as control mechanisms to increase accuracy, efficiency, and safety, and to reduce labor costs per manufactured unit. Consequently, many semiskilled and skilled occupations are being eliminated entirely, such as pattern-cutters and sewing machine operators in the textile industry. However, some manufacturing technician jobs are emerging, requiring skills in laser operation, computer programming, and numerical control systems maintenance and repair.

Vocational education has a vital role to play in collaborating closely with business and industry in the areas of high technology training and retraining in order to upgrade workers with the emerging new occupational skills and maintain a competitive edge.

SOURCE: ERIC OVERVIEW Digest #37, Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

Working for Yourself



Before you plunge into the business of being your own boss, you need to decide whether self-employment is really for you. How do you gather the information to make this decision?

"Working for Yourself" is a publication that presents the advantages and disadvantages of self-employment in neutral, real-life terms. Self-employment may give you more independence, and possibly more money, but the work and initial financial support it requires can damage personal relationships and drain savings accounts. Some people thrive on the challenges running their own business present; others may feel overwhelmed and overburdened.

HOW CAN IT BE USED?

"Working for Yourself" is arranged in the natural order of the career exploration and decision-making process. This sequence, however, is flexible. The person who already has decided on a career or who already has a new idea to bring to the marketplace can start at any section of the book that seems relevant. Generous cross-referencing and indexing not only allow the reader to find topics, but also suggest related and relevant ideas.

WHAT INFORMATION DOES IT OFFER?

Self-Employment Options:

"Working for Yourself" discusses what self-employment in five major categories of occupations is like.

Entrepreneurship:

"Working for Yourself" helps to describe the characteristics of people who have been successful at making business innovations. The Entrepreneur's Quiz by Joseph Mancuso offers prospective entrepreneurs an "entrepreneurial profile."

Business Planning:

"Working for Yourself" provides reminders about all of the activities necessary for the successful small business owner and suggests the types of skills and knowledge you would want to have or hire in a business venture.

The cost of "Working for Yourself" is $6.95. It is available from the National Career Information System, Career Planning Information, 1787 Agate Street, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

Using

Labor Market Information

In Career Exploration
And Decision Making

A Workshop for Counselor Educators

The American Association for Counseling and Development is presenting a series of workshops for counselor educators entitled "Using Labor Market Information in Career Exploration and Decision Making."

These workshops are part of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee's (NOICC) national program, "Improve Career Decision Making." They are aimed at assisting counselors and educators to help youths and adults gather, analyze, and use occupational and labor market information to make informed career decisions.

Counselor educators who teach in the more than 450 institutions that prepare professional counselors are the target audience of this project.

The workshop objectives are:

* To help counselor educators gain a contemporary perspective on labor market concepts and applications.
* To help them better understand the career development process and techniques for using labor market information in career counseling.
* To help them explore labor market information sources, systems, resources, and products.

Three workshops are offered in April in the following locations:

DATE:	LOCATION:	PRESENTER:	REGISTRATION DEADLINE
April 14	Kansas ACD Wichita Hilton East Wichita, KS	Sandra Meggert	April 7
April 15	Johns Hopkins Univ. Baltimore, MD	Carl McDaniels	April 8
April 29	Denver Univ. Denver, CO	Sandra Meggert	April 22

The cost for the workshop is $10. If you would like more information about these workshops, call Montana SOICC staff at 444-2741.

"Westward.....Grow!"

Americans continued their western migration in the '80s with Alaska, Nevada, and Arizona having the fastest population growth, according to a Census Bureau report.

"The states ending up with fewer residents in 1987 than in 1980 were Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, and West Virginia--all states suffering from a depression in the farm economy," bureau researchers said.

All told, the U.S. population grew 7.4 percent since 1980 to 243.4 million. Western and southern states gained the most, absorbing 15 million of this decade's 17 million new residents.

The West grew the fastest, gaining 15 percent more residents than it had in 1980. Southern states grew 11.3 percent. The midwest, by comparison, grew by only 1.1 percent.

POPULATION EXPANDS IN WESTERN STATES

These are the fastest growing states between 1980 and 1987.

Alaska	30.7%
Nevada	26.0%
Arizona	25.0%
Florida	23.4%
Texas	18.0%
California	16.9%
New Mexico	15.1%
Utah	15.0%
New Hampshire	14.8%
Colorado	14.1%
Georgia	13.9%
Hawaii	12.2%

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, NATTS News

Technological Skills?

Major institutions concerned with education are adamant that unless steps are taken to improve technological literacy, U.S. competitiveness will be in jeopardy. Indeed, employers complain that technologically illiterate workers are holding back the use of significant new techniques.

Now, nearly 40 states have some kind of technology education courses. One major hurdle to the movement has been the education of teachers themselves. In Illinois, officials discovered that 80% of industrial arts teachers did not know how to use computers.

SOURCE: NATTS News, December 1987

FLEXpertise, not Expertise

Economic security in the post-industrial society depends less on expertise and more on "flexpertise"--the ability to continually adapt individual knowledge and skill. This was the message that Dorothy A. Horrell, vice president for educational services for the Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System gave. She was speaking to a group of the American Vocational Association (AVA) New Professionals.

Teaching students to think and learn creatively so they don't become dislocated adults will force teachers to modify and add content to their programs because of changing occupational requirements.

"The emphasis of vocational education must not be strictly on training for a single job, but rather vocational education must be seen as part of the continuum of education for life and career," said Horrell.

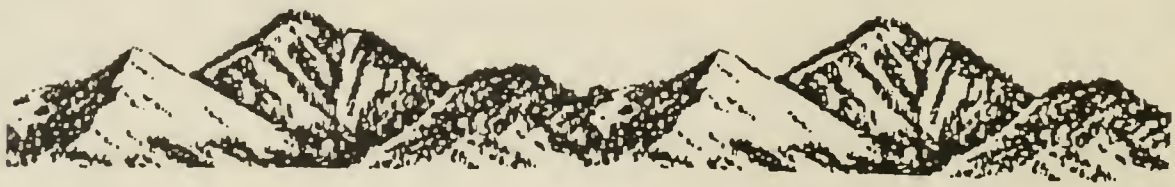
She listed major workplace trends that are influencing vocational educators:

> Jobs will be created faster than the labor force will grow, which could result in tighter labor markets and skill shortages.
>
> Workers will change jobs five or six times during their normal work life.
>
> Many new and existing jobs will require higher levels of analytic, quantitative, and verbal skills.
>
> Most additional jobs will be in large metropolitan areas, but the highest rates of job growth will be in smaller, developing urban areas, largely in the "Sun Belt."
>
> Women, minorities, and immigrants, who have traditionally been underutilized and suffer from labor market problems, will be the fastest growing labor populations through the year 2000.

Other factors are the greater effect of foreign competition on U.S. industries, a shift from an economy based on manufacturing to one based on service and information, and the greater use of technology.

The workforce being prepared and trained in the next decade will use the skills and knowledge acquired well into the 21st century.

SOURCE: AVA Update, February 1988



Picking Your Path

"Picking Your Path" is a video tape program that is designed for students at the elementary school level. This video presentation is done in a format that is oriented for children from kindergarten through 6th grade.

The video features a puppet named Professor Horace and a talking robot named William Tell. Children interact with the animated characters to explore 14 groups of occupations.

The video is interesting and entertaining to young people, while it provides information to expand students' perceptions of the world of work.

The "Picking Your Path" video tape sells for $50. The accompanying curriculum guide provides career information, activities, and resources. If you are interested in more information about "Picking Your Path," write to:

Picking Your Path
Montana SOICC
P.O. Box 1728
Helena, MT 59624

It Doesn't Hurt to Ask...

According to Robert Half Inc., which surveyed executives on job candidates' most unusual demands, the following was found:

Most outrageous demand by a job seeker: One applicant wanted to be paid extra for any time spent "thinking about work" at night or during weekends.

Most sensible demand by a job seeker: One applicant wanted Italian and Chinese restaurants to be within walking distance of the office.

Kate Kahle, Editor
Montana SOICC Newsletter
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Robert N. Arnold
Program Officer
Montana SOICC

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, contact the Montana SOICC at P.O. Box 1728, Helena, Montana 59624. The Montana SOICC reserves the right to edit all information submitted.

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